



FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

“The Last Year of the Life of Christ, Part 67”

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Informed. Insightful. Intelligent.



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Matthew 27:45-50, Mark 15:33-37, Luke 23:45-49, John 19:28-30

From noon until three in the afternoon, darkness covered the whole land and the sun was obscured. At three o'clock Jesus said in a loud voice, **"Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?"** (which means, **"My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"**).

We attend Church to obtain the mind of Christ, meaning, to have the Bible illuminated in our minds so that we can clearly understand the principles that Jesus taught and base our daily personal decisions on those principles.

We come to Church because we want to be obedient to the Bible, which is the doctrine of Jesus Christ, in an informed, insightful and intelligent manner.

In our last lesson, I made the point that Jesus chose to fulfill the Scripture and die on the Cross because the prophecy in **Luke 18:33** records:

33 They will scourge Him and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again."

Jesus chose to fulfill the Scripture and die on the Cross because to do so was the will of God. Jesus chose to fulfill the Scripture, although to do so meant that He would have to die on the Cross as His enemies mocked Him and rejoiced around Him, His disciples forsook Him and His mother grieved and cried around Him.

In the Jewish economy, a mother generally had complete responsibility for her son for the first seven to eight years of his life, after which the boy was turned over to his father so that he could learn his father's trade. Even after her son was turned over to his father, Mom was still an important person in the boy's life. Think of the traditional mother role that women played before the 1970's, when women considered their husband and children as their primary responsibility, rather than being secondary to working outside of the home.

But interestingly, Mary considered Jesus to be her primary relationship, although Jesus did not consider Mary to be His. **Matthew 12:46-50** records:
46 While [Jesus] was still talking to the multitudes, behold, His mother and brothers stood outside, seeking to speak with Him.

47 Then one said to Him, "Look, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, seeking to speak with You."

48 But He answered and said to the one who told Him, "Who is My mother and who are My brothers?"

49 And He stretched out His hand toward His disciples and said, "Here are My mother and My brothers!

50 For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother."



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We can understand why Mary considered Jesus as her primary relationship when we examine the fact that Jesus refers to brother, sister and mother, but there is no reference to Mary's husband Joseph, the man that was known as Jesus' earthly father. **Mark 6:1-3** records:

1 Then [Jesus] went out from [the other side of the Sea of Galilee] and came to His own country, and His disciples followed Him.

2 And when the Sabbath had come, [Jesus] began to teach in the synagogue. And many hearing Him were astonished, saying, "Where did this Man get these things? And what wisdom is this which is given to Him, that such mighty works are performed by His hands!

3 Is [Jesus] not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?" So they were offended at Him.

Those in Galilee knew Jesus as the carpenter, Mary's son, rather than as Joseph's son. This indicates that, at this point in the chronology, Joseph is probably not alive. The last Biblical reference to Mary's husband Joseph as a living person is in **Luke 2:41-49**, which says:

41 [Jesus'] parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover.

42 And when [Jesus] was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast.

43 When they had finished the days, as they returned, the Boy Jesus lingered behind in Jerusalem. And Joseph and His mother did not know it; 44 but supposing Him to have been in the company, they went a day's journey, and sought Him among their relatives and acquaintances.

45 So when they did not find [Jesus], they returned to Jerusalem, seeking Him.

46 Now so it was that after three days they found [Jesus] in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions.

47 And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers.

48 So when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said to Him, "Son, why have You done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously."

49 And [Jesus] said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?"

So Mary is probably following Jesus because Jesus is her oldest son and her husband Joseph is not alive. In addition to this, Jesus is definitely not married, and His brothers probably are. Since the last biblical reference to Joseph occurred when Jesus was twelve years old, it is likely, although not definite, that Jesus' four brothers have all been born by the time Jesus was



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twelve. When Jesus started His ministry at thirty years of age, his brothers were all probably at least eighteen years of age. At the time of Jesus' crucifixion four years later, they were all probably at least twenty-two years old. In Jesus' day, most young men were married by their eighteenth birthday, and certainly by their twenty-second.

But, although Mary was focused on Jesus, Jesus was focused on the salvation of the world. In the lection in **Matthew 12** that we just read, Jesus made it clear that He had bigger fish to fry than tending to His birth family, as, during His ministry, His birth family was not all that accepting of Him. **John 7:5** records: **5 For even His brothers did not believe in Him.**

His brothers, like the people in His hometown, had a hard time accepting the fact that someone that they knew as a little boy could actually be the Savior of the world, Jesus' ability to perform miracles notwithstanding. Jesus knew this, as, in **Luke 4:23-27**:

23 [Jesus] said to them, "You will surely say this proverb to Me, 'Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in Your country.' "

24 Then [Jesus] said, "Assuredly, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own country.

25 But I tell you truly, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a great famine throughout all the land;

26 but to none of them was Elijah sent except to Zarephath, in the region of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow.

27 And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian."

Prophets are generally not heeded at home because home folk generally ignore the teachings of those whose diapers that they changed. And the reaction of those in Galilee to whom Jesus was speaking proved His point, as **Luke 4:28-29** records:

28 So all those in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,

29 and rose up and thrust Him out of the city; and they led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw Him down over the cliff.

The Jewish leaders in Galilee were prejudiced against Jesus because He was one of them, coming from Galilee. The Jewish leaders in Jerusalem were prejudiced against Jesus because He was not one of them, but came from Galilee. Jesus' disciples forsook Him and denied Him because the Jewish leaders did not accept Jesus. The many people that Jesus helped were in Jerusalem for the Passover, but, although they shouted 'Hosanna' when Jesus came to town, they were not there to stick up for Jesus as the Jewish leaders



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turned Him over to the Romans. When Jesus was crucified, they stood and watched as the Jewish leaders and the Romans taunted Him. So, although Jesus ministered to many that needed His help, at the end, the only ones there were the women in His family. The Bible says, in **Matthew 27:39-44**, **Mark 15:29-32**, **Luke 23:35-44**, **John 19:25-27**:

It was about noon. Standing by the cross of Jesus were His mother and His mother's sister, as well as Mary the wife of Clopas and Mary Magdalene.

The Apostle John is the one disciple that has not forsaken Jesus.

In His writings, John identifies himself in the third person, calling himself "the disciple that Jesus loved". Often, we hear this dyslexically, thinking of John as the disciple that loved Jesus, but John does not say that he loved Jesus, but rather, that Jesus loved him. Let me explain the difference.

In **Mark 14:27**:

27 Then Jesus said to [the disciples], "All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: 'I will strike the Shepherd, And the sheep will be scattered.'

This prophecy came to pass as the disciples fled when Jesus was arrested, and then Peter denied Jesus in the courtyard. Interestingly, John was never molested by the Jews. As a matter of fact, John's account of the crucifixion that has more details than either Matthew or Mark, as Matthew was not at the Cross and neither was Mark. John also has more details than Luke, whose Gospel is a researched history rather than an eyewitness account. And John tells us, in **John 19:35**:

35 And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you may believe.

Peter went with Jesus almost as far as John, but Peter fell prey to the wiles of the devil, as **Luke 22:31-32** tells us:

31 And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat.

32 But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren."

Jesus prophesied Peter's denials, but there is no such warning or prophecy given to John, because John was the apostle that Jesus loved. Jesus loved John, and protected him from the trials that the other apostles had to face. Now, John was no more a perfect apostle than any of the rest of them. **Luke 9:51-56** records Jesus' rebuke of John, as it says:

51 Now it came to pass, when the time had come for [Jesus] to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem,

52 and sent messengers before His face. And as they went, they entered a village of the Samaritans, to prepare for Him.



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53 But [the Samaritans] did not receive [Jesus], because His face was set for the journey to Jerusalem.

54 And when His disciples James and John saw this, they said, “Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just as Elijah did?”

55 But [Jesus] turned and rebuked [James and John], and said, “You do not know what manner of spirit you are of.

56 For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men’s lives but to save them.” And they went to another village.

John wanted to call down fire from heaven just as Peter wanted to cut off ears. Both of them were zealous for Jesus’ safety and comfort, but both of them exhibited the spirit to destroy men’s lives rather than save them. But Jesus chose to save John from the trials and tribulations that the other disciples faced while allowing Peter to be exposed to the wiles of the devil, and as far as I can see, there was only one reason.

I made it my business to not look over my son Paul’s shoulder when he left home to go to college. When he was eight years old, I started telling him that he would be on his own when he was eighteen, because I knew that when he reached that age, he would need his own space to do his own thing. And since he knew that I was not trying to make his decisions for him, he felt free to ask me for my opinion when he had a decision to make. But Paul made good decisions, and, eventually, Paul took a job that I considered to be very lucrative, and prepared to move out of the house into an apartment in the town in which he was going to be working.

I had a conversation with him just before he left home, and gave him the one direct instruction that I have given him since he left home to go to college. I let him know that if anything happened to me, it would be his responsibility to look after his mother. I gave him this instruction for one reason. The Bible says, in **Matthew 27:39-44, Mark 15:29-32, Luke 23:35-44, John 19:25-27:**

When Jesus saw His mother and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He said to His mother, “Woman, here is your son.”

Then He said to the disciple, “Here is your mother.”

This is why John was the only disciple not molested in any way during Jesus’ trials while the other disciples were being threatened, being afraid and being unfaithful. Jesus wasn’t all that close with his birth family; He was much closer to His disciples than His brothers, and even ignored His mother and brothers when they came looking for him. But when Jesus was planning His sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, and was spotlighting sin in everyone that participated, the Jews, the Romans, and the apostles, Jesus kept one beloved apostle, John, in reserve to look after His mother.

The Bible doesn’t tell us how or why Jesus chose John over the other disciples, but the Bible does tell us what Jesus chose John to do, and that was to



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look after His mother. Jesus did not entrust his mother to his brothers, but to John, as the lection **Matthew 27:39-44, Mark 15:29-32, Luke 23:35-44, John 19:25-27** tells us:

From that moment on, this disciple took [Mary, Jesus' mother] into his home.

So, son, rather than naming you after the apostle Paul, I should probably have named you after the apostle John, because your job is to take care of your mother if anything happens to me. Now, sir, I don't plan for anything to happen to me; I am planning to live a long life and spend many years dancing with your mother once she heals from her surgeries. And, sir, you don't have to curtail your life in any way to take care of your mother; I'm sure that she will have the intelligence to recognize the difference in the relationship between a man and his mother and a man and his wife. **Genesis 2:24** tells us:

24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

Biblically speaking, married couples should not have mother-in-law problems. Both a man and his mother or a woman and her mother should recognize that their relationships are secondary to their marital relationship with their spouse, which is primary. One day, my son will pick a woman to marry. His mother and I might agree with his selection, or we might have the personal opinion that he should look for someone more fitting, but my plan is that we will support his selection, because we understand that which **Romans 3:23** says: **23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.**

Since everyone is a sinner of some description, I can find fault with any young woman in which my son is interested. There is something wrong with every woman, because there is something wrong with everyone. The key question that I have is: "Are the two of you willing to work out those things that are wrong with you, regardless as to what they are?" In other words, are you willing to take one another, for better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish until death do you part? Because if you are willing to do so, you can work through any problem.

Genesis 2:24 tells us that the purpose of parents is to raise their children to the point of maturity and then allow them to leave the nest. One of the great tragedies of our time is that many parents don't realize this, but cling to their adult children even though the children should be released to get on with their lives. It is important that husbands and wives continue to bond properly with one another after their children are born so that raising their children becomes a secondary activity while their primary activity is bonding with their spouse. When either or both parents develop a relationship with their child that they consider primary, they tend to cling to their child as a buffer between themselves and their spouse rather than pushing the child into independence. If the marital relationship is not



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primary, the child has difficulty escaping the nest, and the parents have difficulty maintaining their marital relationship.

But forewarned is forearmed, and Marie and I know that Paul's marital relationship will be his primary relationship while his relationship with us will be secondary. That means, that when we go to visit Paul in his marital home, we will recognize that we are guests of Paul and his wife, and we have to be content to be guests, not parents. Good guests don't come to your house and rearrange the furniture, or intrude on your privacy in any other way.

So Jesus protected John from the trials and tribulations that the other apostles had to face so that His mother would have a home in which she could visit permanently. And having taken care of this last earthly responsibility, Jesus began the last part of His passion, as **Matthew 27:45-50, Mark 15:33-37, Luke 23:45-49** and **John 19:28-30** tells us:

From noon until three in the afternoon, darkness covered the whole land and the sun was obscured. At three o'clock Jesus said in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" (which means, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?").

The prophet Habakkuk asked God about His interaction with men, in **Habakkuk 1:12-13:**

12 Are You not from everlasting, O LORD my God, my Holy One? We shall not die. O LORD, You have appointed them for judgment; O Rock, You have marked them for correction.

13 You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on wickedness. Why do You look on those who deal treacherously, and hold Your tongue when the wicked devours a person more righteous than he?

God is too pure to behold evil, and cannot look on wickedness. Then how could God have dealt with man from the beginning, from the Garden, when the nature of man is to sin constantly?

God deferred His wrath against man's sin, anticipating that there would be a sacrifice for sin that be worthy to atone for all of the sins of man. The sacrifice that God anticipated was His only begotten Son, who voluntarily sacrificed Himself for the sins of mankind. During the three hour period of darkness, God took vision from the land. Remember that there were no torches lighting the Cross, as Jesus was crucified in the morning, and this darkness began at noonday. And for those of you that may not realize it, there were no electric lights, no street lights, to illuminate Calvary. When the Bible says that the sun was obscured in the middle of the day, the Bible is describing an unnatural, total darkness for which the men crucifying Jesus were unprepared.

This great darkness obscured God's vision of Jesus, as God poured down all of His wrath against sin on Him. God is too pure to behold evil, and cannot look on wickedness, and Jesus, hanging on the Cross, symbolized, to God, all of



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the sins of mankind. Jesus, while on the Cross in the dark, was as godforsaken as every hellbound sinner.

Maurice S. Rawlings, a cardiologist at the Diagnostic Center in Chattanooga, Tennessee, came to faith in Christ as a result of an experience with a dying patient who kept screaming, "I am in hell!" Rawlings wrote in his book, "To Hell and Back":

The patient began "coming to." But whenever I would reach for instruments or otherwise interrupt my compression of his chest, the patient would again lose consciousness, roll his eyes upward, arch his back in mild convulsion, stop breathing, and die once more.

Each time he regained heartbeat and respiration, the patient screamed, "I am in hell!" He was terrified and pleaded with me to help him. I was scared to death. In fact, the episode literally scared the hell out of me! It terrified me enough to write this book...

He said, "Don't you understand? I am in hell. Each time you quit I go back to hell! Don't let me go back to hell!..."

Hallucinations, I thought at first. But, most victims say, 'Take your big hands off me, you're breaking my ribs,' but he was saying the opposite, 'For God's sake don't stop! Don't you understand, every time you stop I'm in Hell.' As a result, I started working feverishly and rapidly. By this time the patient had experienced three or four episodes of complete unconsciousness and clinical death from cessation of both heartbeat and breathing.

After several death episodes he finally asked me, "How do I stay out of hell?" I told him I guessed it was the same principle learned in Sunday School – that I guessed Jesus Christ would be the one whom you would ask to save you.

Then he said, "I don't know how. Pray for me."

Pray for him! What nerve! I told him I was a doctor, not a preacher.

"Pray for me!" he repeated.

I knew I had no choice: It was a dying man's request. So I had him repeat the words after me as we worked – right there on the floor. It was a very simple prayer because I did not know much about praying. It went something like this:

Lord Jesus, I ask you to keep me out of hell. Forgive my sins. I turn my life over to you. If I die, I want to go to heaven. If I live, I'll be "on the hook" forever.

The patient's condition finally stabilized, and he was transported to a hospital. I went home, dusted off the Bible, and started reading it.



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A few days later, Dr. Rawlings approached his patient with pad and pencil in hand for an interview. When he asked him about his experiences in hell, the patient did not recall these experiences, and could not remember being in hell. However, after he recovered, he became a strong Christian, whereas previously, he had gone to church only occasionally. He did remember the prayer they had said together, then losing consciousness once or twice after that. Although he did not recall the experiences in hell, he did recall standing in the back of the room, watching the medical team working on his body on the floor. He also remembered meeting both his mother and stepmother in one of the death episodes that took place after praying with the doctor. Rawlings wrote:

The meeting place was a gorge full of beautiful colors. He also saw other relatives who had died before. He “saw” his mother for the first time. She had died at age twenty-one when he was fifteen months old, and his father had soon remarried. This man had never even seen a picture of his real mother, and yet he was able to pick her picture out of several others a few weeks later when his mother’s sister, after hearing of his experience, produced some family pictures for identification. There was no mistake...He was astounded and so was his father.

Jesus gives us the case of the utterances of a man that is enduring the penalty for sin when he says, in a loud voice, **“Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?” (which means, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”**

Fortunately, for us, Jesus, like the man who prayed for salvation as he was dying, recovered from the torture of being forsaken by God. The darkness ended, and the Jews and Romans were able to react, as the lection, **Matthew 27:45-50, Mark 15:33-37, Luke 23:45-49** and **John 19:28-30** continues:

When some of those who were standing there heard it, they said, “Look, this Man is calling for Elijah.”

And now Jesus, knowing that everything was accomplished, said the words “I am thirsty” in fulfillment of Scripture. A jar of sour wine was sitting there, and one of the men ran to it at once. He took a sponge, filled it with the wine, put it on a hyssop stalk, and lifted it to Jesus’ mouth. “Let Him drink,” he and the others said. “Let’s see if Elijah comes to take Him down and save Him.”

The Jews misunderstood Jesus’ cry to God, but the Romans understood Jesus’ cry for something to drink. **Psalm 22:14-18** describes Jesus’ crucifixion: **14 I am poured out like water, And all My bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; It has melted within Me.**

15 My strength is dried up like a potsherd, And My tongue clings to My jaws; You have brought Me to the dust of death.



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16 For dogs have surrounded Me; The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet;

17 I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me.

18 They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots.

The “bones out of joint” refers to the skeletal activity of crucifixion, which dislocates bones. The piercing of the hands and feet refers to the nails that fastened Jesus to the Cross. The division of and the casting lots for Jesus’ garments are directly fulfilled by the Roman soldiers, and Jesus’ cry of thirst fulfills the prophecy that His tongue would cling to His jaws. Psalm 22 is a Psalm of David, who was the King of Israel for forty years, sometime between 1012BC and 920BC, depending upon which commentator that you chose to believe. So, Psalm 22 was written at least 900 years before the death of Christ, and it serves as an accurate prophecy of Jesus’ crucifixion experience.

Since Jesus has endured the separation from God required to atone for our sins and fulfilled the Biblical prophecies of His crucifixion, Jesus is ready to end His Passion experience, as the lection, **Matthew 27:45-50, Mark 15:33-37, Luke 23:45-49** and **John 19:28-30** tells us:

After taking the wine, Jesus again cried out in a loud voice, “It is finished!”

Then [Jesus] bowed His head. “Father,” He said, “into Your hands I commit My spirit.”

After saying these words, [Jesus] yielded up His spirit and breathed His last.

Jesus did everything that was required to fulfill the Scripture. Jesus took care of His earthly responsibilities by delegating His mother’s care to John. Jesus took care of His heavenly responsibility by dying to fulfill the Scripture and atone for the sins of mankind, and then, having completed His tasks, He committed His eternal spirit to our Maker, our Father, God. Jesus voluntarily gave His life, physically, on the old Rugged Cross, in such a way as to prove the prophetic power of God, and in the presence of witnesses that transmitted the experience to us so that those of us that are willing to believe them, believe in God’s prophecy, believe in Jesus’ sacrifice and believe in Jesus’ Lordship over our lives so that we can avoid hell. Jesus’ beloved disciple John tells us, in **John 20:30-31**:

30 And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book;

31 but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

Jesus Himself testifies that His life is about the avoidance of Hell, as **John 3:16-17** tells us:



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16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

God offers us Heaven as a free gift through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Let us not arrogantly reject Jesus as did the Jews, or ignorantly reject Jesus as did the Romans, but let us recognize the purpose and the prophecy of Jesus' sacrifice and, in so doing, stay out of Hell.

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